

Domaine Ollier-Taillefer

Faugères



The Wines

- *Allegro*: Equal parts Roussanne and Vermentino: Appellation status was granted to Faugères for white wine in 2005 (red and rosé were accorded AOC in 1982) and only around 4% of what Faugères produces today is white wine. Ollier-Taillefer's Allegro comes from 11 acres of vines and is raised entirely in tank. In some years the malolactic fermentation is blocked but often it's not, and regardless the wine is quite fresh and pure, thanks to its elevation and schist geology. It is a wine with Chardonnay-like richness, yet with an elegance and an attractive mineral bitterness on the edges that is uniquely Faugères. Production averages 2,000 cases.
- *Le Clos des Murettes Rosé*: Hand-harvested. The Grenache and Cinsault--the grapes with the least color--along with the Mourvèdre are pressed directly, while the deeper colored Syrah is worked in a *saignée* method (which also gives more texture and aromatic complexity). This is a rosé with a beguiling pale color that belies its breadth and richness, and it's a rosé that works at the table every bit as well as it does on the porch. Production averages 1,500 cases.
- *Tournée Générale*: Ollier-Taillefer's Tournée Générale comes from vines in the village of Fos to the northeast of AOP Faugères and is raised entirely in tank with no oak. The wine is quite fresh and pure, thanks to its elevation (200-350 meters) and schist geology. It's a new wine created in vintage 2023 by the younger generation--two young Ollier brothers--who wanted to make a hip wine without any sulfur. Their elders said okay, but it's got to be done adroitly and bottled without any funk. The boys rose to the challenge.

About the label, the expression *tournee générale* refers to the act of buying a round of drinks for folks. The figure on the label was inspired by Punchinello, a comic character from the 17th-century Italian Commedia dell'arte theatrical tradition. He's carrying an amphora of red wine, reminding us that wine is about (among other things) celebration and conviviality!

Production averages 6,000 bottles.

- *Le Clos des Murettes*: Grenache, Syrah, Carignan in that order, all de-stemmed. Labeled as Les Collines until the 2018 vintage, this is hand-harvested, raised in tank, a wine that speaks transparently of schist and its dark depths; long, lithe, and deliciously Languedocien. Production averages 5,500 cases.

- *La Grande Réserve*: equal parts old vine Carignan, Grenache, and Syrah, all de-stemmed. In some years, a dollop of Mourvèdre: When critics speak of mistakes or faults in Languedoc's wines in general terms, the finger points first to oak, the misuse and overuse of which wipes out so much that is special about Languedoc wines—namely, the fragrant aromatics, and the sense of *garrigue* and soil from the terroir. The second thing they point to is brettanomyces.

There's neither oak nor brett in the Grande Réserve. Nary a splinter nor a cell. Aged on its fine lees during a nicely relaxed *élevage*, in this wine you have the potpourri of Faugères' aromatics—its black olives, thyme, sage, sea salt, and on the palate the sense of licking black stone. This is what Languedoc and Languedoc alone can do so well. Average production is 2,500 cases.